

## Literary Analysis: Diction

The term diction refers to the author's word choice. Many words are associated with certain feelings or emotions. Happy and ecstatic have similar dictionary definitions (known as denotation), but they convey different feelings (known as connotation). Both words suggest gladness. The word ecstatic, however, means that someone is unable to control his or her enthusiasm, whereas happy merely suggests a smile on someone's face. This activity helps you understand the importance of an author's word choice.

**Directions:** Reread the paragraph that begins, "Tim Johnson was advancing..." in Chapter 10. Complete the chart and then use the back of this paper to answer the questions below.

Word or phrase	What ideas come to mind when you hear that word or phrase?
snail's pace	<i>Example: Almost motionless</i>
dedicated to one course	
invisible force	
shiver like a horse shedding flies	
alist	
pulled gradually toward us	

### Concluding Thoughts

1. What is the overall tone of these words and phrases?
2. How do the images make you feel?
3. How effective is the diction in this passage?